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SOCIAL WORKERS UPHOLD COURT EDICT, CHIDE N. O. BOARD

When the New Orleans School Board on June 1 declared that "education of both races can proceed more effectively under a segregated system" it was a clear gesture of defiance toward the Supreme Court's final ruling on school integration.

But this display of audacity and stubbornness did not go without challenge. Ninety-five social workers, including some of the most eminent members of the profession in the city, signed a public petition to the board, urging that it erase the impression that "the law is being defied or at least circumvented."

The social workers went on to say:

"When officials in positions of authority and responsibility defy the law of the land it is difficult to teach respect for law and order to children.

"We cannot accept or agree with the school board's unanimous opinion . . . It is our conviction that children can learn to live together only through experience, and school life provides a basic milieu for this.

"Segregation is deprivation. Social workers have impressed upon them daily what deprivation does to children of both Negro and white races. It creates fears, a sense of inferiority, a lack of respect for the dignity of the individual, and a consequent lack of opportunity to learn to work cooperatively with others, all of which negates the basic concepts of democracy.

"We respectfully call to the attention of the board of education that section in the ruling of the Supreme Court making obsolete all provisions of federal, state, or local law requiring or permitting racial discrimination in public schools.

"We urge the Orleans Parish board of education to reconsider its position and to act promptly in compliance with the ruling of the Supreme Court by immediately drafting a plan for the integration of the schools of Orleans Parish and implementing it as soon as possible."

This incident in a Deep South state seems to indicate the mustering of public conscience now required if integration of the schools is to be achieved.

The court ruling on May 31 asserted that "racial discrimination in public education is unconstitutional . . . All provisions of federal, state, or local law requiring or permitting such discrimination must yield to this principle." But at the same time the court said:

"Full implementation of these constitutional principles may require solution of varied local school problems. School authorities have the primary responsibility for elucidating, assessing, and solving these problems; courts will have to consider whether the action of school authorities constitutes good faith in implementation of the governing constitutional principles. Because of their proximity to local conditions and the possible need for further hearings, the courts which originally heard these cases can best perform this judicial appraisal."

The tendency has been manifested by certain boards and public officials to seize upon the "primary responsibility" granted them as an escape clause permitting indefinite delay; they must be reminded that "discrimination must yield." Such forthright and courageous reminders as that issued by the social workers in New Orleans should be repeated over the South. Every person who tells local officials that he wants them to obey the law will directly affect the way they "assess" the situation, and will strengthen the standards of compliance set up by lower federal courts who are in "proximity to local conditions."

The decision of May 31 was a disappointment to many. The Chicago Defender declared, "However well-meaning the Supreme Court judges may have been they are now in the position of the cow that gave a full bucket of milk and then promptly kicked it over. What is worse, the milk was supposed to be for us, the undernourished, underprivileged and underestimated. . . ." The Oklahoma City **Black Dispatch** called the edict "a complete surrender to states rights and local self-government."

But since the court lacks militia it might be said in defense of the justices that their issuance of a "forthwith" or deadline decree would have risked ridicule to themselves rather than have achieved integration in the states ruled by the more reckless Dixiecrats. Still, the wisdom of the court in holding "compliance" hearings might be questioned. No formula for integration emerged from the testimony presented in April—indeed, the school children directly involved in the South Carolina and Virginia cases did not gain admittance.

One of the results of the seemingly fruitless extension of deliberations has been to lend audacity to supporters of such repressive groups as the Citizens Councils. They claim that their threats of violence forced the court to back down.

However, we can take heart in the progress that has been achieved in border states, and in the fact that segregation's illegality has been twice stated explicitly. No one familiar with the rooted ramifications of Jim Crow expected the

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Sports Promoters Defy Taboos on Mixed Play

Integration is fair play, and fair play is good business. Therefore, two New Orleans sports promoters, both well-known businessmen, have tackled Jim Crow head-on.

Blaise D'Antoni, head of a group which is arranging bouts for a rising white New Orleans fighter, boldly announced that interracial boxing is not illegal in Louisiana. He said no worthy white opponents were available for his protege, so he was going to bring a Negro fighter to the Crescent City. The boxing commission disapproved, by a 3-2 vote, but now is reportedly reconsidering. The last mixed bout was held in New Orleans in 1892.

Jake Nowak, president of the New Orleans Pelicans baseball club, declared he was perfectly willing to hire a Negro player if one of suitable talent were to be had. The Southern Association, to which the Pelicans belong, has remained "lily-white" although most of the other minor leagues in the region have had mixed teams for several seasons.

When Nowak was advised that Birmingham, another Southern League club, had an ordinance against interracial play, he was not fazed. He said he understood the law was an "off-and-on again thing."

Thus, competition for the amusement dollar and the proved merit of Negro athletes is tumbling ugly old barriers.

HOUSTON PANELS DRAFT FORMULAS FOR INTEGRATION

The Southwestern Conference on Integration held in Houston on May 17 was opened with these words from the Scriptures:

"And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called the Repairer of the breach, the Restorer of paths to dwell in."

Thus very appropriately did the Rev. Robert E. Hayes outline the role of the assembly, and he declared, "The eyes of a skeptical world are turned toward us here today. We must repair the greatest breach in America—the breach of racial discrimination and segregation—the breach that has too long paralyzed our effectiveness as a nation. And we must restore paths for all men to dwell in peace and lasting goodwill."

Last month's Patriot published three of the reports of the educators who participated in a panel discussion of problems in the integration of schools. A fourth report, an account of events in St. Louis, is included elsewhere in this issue. All of the school administrators —from Arizona, West Virginia, Missouri —told how firmness and fair play brought about the quick elimination of long-standing injustices.

Delegates to the conference also took part in commissions which explored other aspects of achieving racial integration in the South.

The commission on "What Can I Do as an Individual," whose chairman was Robert A. Childers, and secretary, the Rev. J. Paul Stevens, submitted this inspiring report:

"I can integrate myself so that my actions and words and thoughts for brotherhood are more nearly consistent, so that what I do does not negate what I say, so that my sanction, my participation, and my money continue to support only those practices I say I believe in.

"I can inform myself and with that information I can inform others by getting the facts that let in the light, answer objections and dispel fears.

"I can involve myself in the normal contacts of everyday life where segregation may exist . . . in ways that will carry constructive witness, such as asking whether everyone is welcome regardless of race or color; if not, what barriers exist and why; if they can't now be removed; by talking with top-level responsible persons; by deciding whether in good conscience I can continue to accept such segregated service or privilege.

"I can also involve myself in every appropriate and constructive group activity, in concert with others of like mind.

"I can influence others — by raising questions anywhere and everywhere that segregation may exist in practice, speech, or thought . . .; —by talking and writing to every possible person, especially every responsible policy-making person, in the direction of integration; —by not accepting segregated privileges or services; —by bringing others to know my friends of other colors or races.

"I can identify myself with all of my brothers by living as though we all are one, on every occasion, in every place, whether present with my brothers or not; so that, just as far as concern and conscience lead me, I will think only those things, do only those things, accept only those things that will keep and build an unbroken friendship, an integrated life without dividing lines or barriers between persons or groups and without any second-class citizenship.

"In all of this every word and act should be one of constructive redemptive love, avoiding embarrassment, scorn, condemnation and violence. Also it is apparent that ordinarily the witness of a small number of majority-group individuals (in this case white) will accomplish larger results more quickly than the witness of many minority-group individuals (in this case Negro)."

The commission on "Integration in Areas Other than Education" was led by Dr. George I. Sanchez. Its report observed that "in the face of still widespread differential treatment of Negroes, there are many signs that point to a gradual easing of restrictions and a diminution of mistreatment."

It proceeded with these observations:

"Transportation. It was the belief of the group that the general public is increasingly less concerned over the enforcement of segregation regulations and customs. Frequently bus drivers and similar employees manifest the same kind of indifference to the enforcement of segregation as does the general public. It was noted, however, that some railroad employees seek to perpetuate segregation by assigning Negroes to certain cars, by refusing Pullman space except in rooms, and by similar tactics.

"Recreation. Considerable headway has been made in this area. More and more, such facilities as public parks and golf courses are being opened on an integrated basis. In Texas, where they were banned, mixed boxing matches have been declared legal recently.

"Professional. The admission of Negro doctors to state and local medical associations is a hopeful sign, and it seems to presage integration in other professional areas. Note was made, however, that many school systems still have teachers' meetings on a segregated basis. A new development is evidenced in the slowly increasing use of Negro nurses for white patients; and, in at least one community, the use of a "Negro" hospital by an increasing number of whites who prefer that hospital to three others available to them in the same community.

"Law Enforcement. It was reported that there is increased employment of Negroes as policemen and as sheriff's deputies. An unanswered question in this connection, though, is whether or not such officers are restricted to Negroes in the exercise of their duties. It seemed the consensus of opinion that if more qualified Negroes applied for positions in law-enforcement agencies that more would be employed readily. In the selection of juries, greater attention is being given to Negro representation in both grand and petit juries. A disturbing feature of that representation is that, too often, it is on a "quota" or token basis.

"Politics. Some beginnings have been made towards integrated political gatherings. It was the thought of the group that, as Negroes become more effective politically, such integration will be accelerated."

The commission then discussed two of the avenues by which integration might be accelerated:

"Political action. It was emphasized that concern by public figures and public agencies for the needs and feelings of a minority are usually in direct proportion to the political effectiveness of that group. Therefore, it was felt that Negro leadership should so organize that real issues in public life could be properly presented to their communities, and so that proper representation could be made to public agents and agencies. . . .

"The use of organized public pressure in the correction of abuses by private as well as by public institutions was emphasized also. Protests should be made whenever an abuse is discovered. Such protests should be sent to persons at high administrative and policy-making levels, rather than to underlings. It was suggested that, often, abuses by employees are really contrary to the policy of the institution and against the wishes of the top administrators . . .

"Especial note was made of the fact that the Negro, as an actual or potential customer, has a powerful force that can be wielded to obtain greater considera-

DR. GEORGE I. SANCHEZ

REV. ROBERT E. HAYES

MR. ROBERT A. CHILDERS

tion for Negroes. The leadership concerned with getting a better deal for the Negro should take steps quickly to exploit this avenue of public pressure.

"Legal action. There seems to be a great deal of confusion over what the law is with reference to race relations. Often times whites act in response to 'laws' and 'regulations' that, in fact, do not exist. The same thing is true of Negroes, many of whom are very hazy as to what the real restrictions are and as to what their rights are. Campaigns to clear up this confusion are urgently needed.

Discussion was given to the possibilities of FEPC. Note was made of the fact that a neighboring state, New Mexico, has not only adopted an FEPC plan but it has also just passed a very good anti-discrimination law. While such legislation may not be possible in our region at the moment, it is not beyond the realm of future possibilities. Furthermore, there are in existence laws and regulations governing public employment that, if properly enforced, would give Negroes increased opportunities in areas from which, by default, they are restricted.

"To help implement much of what is proposed above, and as a device for coordinating and channeling the efforts of people of good will in the direction of improved human relations, it was recommended that every effort be made to establish, at the community and state levels, some kind of councils on human relations. Such councils, representing all sectors of the community, would concern themselves with the ways and means of integration as well as with other advances in human relations. It was felt that such cooperative endeavor would accomplish much more, more effectively and more rapidly, than can be accomplished unilaterally by a minority group—and that the accomplishments would redound to the benefit of the entire community."

A commission whose chairman was the Rev. J. T. Morrow and secretary, the Rev. Calvin K. Stalnaker, discussed "How the Churches Can Help Integration" and included these points among its findings:

"1. The matter of integration has become a problem only because the church, the body of Christ, has failed. The true church will have no problem over race.

"2. Church extension work should be studied in the light of an all-inclusive fellowship. Terminology such as Negro work should be replaced by titles that are not derisive. The race church should give place to the neighborhood church, especially where communities are changing in racial character.

"3. Church leadership needs to make its position known, having prayerfully counted the cost.

"4. There is need for a liberal church in every large city—a pioneering congregation. Its existence should not afford an avenue of escape for those who would see integration working in the church. People who believe in a raceless, classless church might do their best service by remaining with their churches.

5. A Pledge: Anywhere and everywhere, accepting only those privileges and services that are offered to everyone on the same basis, entering each situation with the fullest redemptive intent, living an unbroken fellowship."

In discussing "What Can Youth Do?" a commission led by the Rev. Charles G. Workman agreed that "young people could cure their prejudices themselves if older adults would not impose restrictions on them." The group declared that "meeting people face to face and getting to know them as individuals" was the key to eradicating bias. An outline of the ways in which young people of different races can come to know one another was drawn up.

The commission on "Planning for Integration in Schools" stressed the need for cooperation among parents of all races and firmness and clarity of policy by the school authorities. Its chairman, Dr. James L. Hupp, also contributed these points, based on his experience at West Virginia Wesleyan College:

"Negro students must simply 'be themselves' as they enter into an integrated school. Some tend to enter these situations with the feeling that they must be super-being, or must bend in every direction to act in the way they believe white students act or expect them to act. Simply put, this means the Negro students must be the best they can but remain true to themselves and their own ways of life.

"White students in the long run will accept them better for themselves rather than as something 'artificial.' Also, the latter effort is soon discovered. The emphasis here is on the acceptance of difference rather than the effort for conformity.

"Another point which will facilitate successful integration: Arrangements and understandings are necessary which will cause mingling and diffusion of whites and Negroes in mixed situations. If either for voluntary or involuntary reasons the Negroes cluster together and the whites likewise, then there will be

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